اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War)

سُوْرَةُ الْاَنْفَالِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate)

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْاَنْفَالِ ۭ قُلِ الْاَنْفَالُ لِلّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوْلِ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَصْلِحُوْا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۠ وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗٓ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝١

(8:1) They ask you concerning the spoils of war? Tell them: 'The spoils of war belong to Allah and the Messenger. So fear Allah, and set things right between you, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you are true believers. (1)

(1) The critique of the battle opens with this unusual note. Some disagreements had arisen among the Muslims with regard to sharing the spoils of war. As it was their first experience of fighting under the banner of Islam, the Muslim soldiers had scarcely any notion of the regulations they were required to follow on the battlefield and for settling problems arising from warfare. Doubtlessly some preliminary instructions had been laid down for them in (Surah al-Baqarah 2 )and (Surah Muhammad 47), (See 2: 190 ff. and 47: 4 ff. - Ed.) However the full set of regulations that could contribute to civilizing the conduct of warfare had yet to be laid down. Hence, when it came to war as with several other societal matters, the Muslims were still under the influence of pre-Islamic ideas and concepts. Going by the age-old Arab customs, those who had seized the spoils of war considered themselves their sole and legitimate owners. On the other hand, the Muslims who had concentrated on driving away the enemy rather than on collecting the spoils, claimed that they deserved an equal share of the spoils. They contended that had they slackened in their duty of pursuing the enemy, the latter might have struck back, turning the Muslim victory into a defeat. Similarly, another group of Muslims who had escorted the Prophet (peace he on him) on the battlefield, also laid claim to an equal share, For, they believed, it was they who had rendered an invaluable service insofar as neglect of duty on their part might have resulted in endangering the precious life of the Prophet (peace be on him), in which case the possibility of victory and its attendant spoils and their distribution would all have been totally out of the question. Nonetheless, the group of Muslims who already possessed the spoils saw no merit in these claims. Arguments and counter-arguments gave rise to

bitterness and bad blood. (For disagreements among Muslims on the question of distribution of spoils of war see Ibn Hisham, vol. 1. pp. 641-2; Al-Waqadi, vol. 1, p. 78. See also the comments on the verse in Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir - Ed.)

It was at this juncture that God revealed the present surah. The opening verse takes up this issue. 'They ask you concerning Anfal' is the query with which the surah opens. The very use of the word Anfal instead of ghana'im in the query implies the answer. For the word Anfal, which is the plural of nafl, stands for that which is extra, that which is over and above what is obligatory. If this extra is from the servant, it denotes that additional service which he voluntarily renders over and above what is obligatory. On the other hand, when this extra is from the master, it denotes the additional reward which the master awards his servant over and above what he is entitled to. What is being conveyed here by using the word Anfal is, in fact, that all wrangling about spoils is out of place since it concerns not their rights, but the additional rewards they might receive from God. Any and all heated discussion in which they engaged was irrelevant since it was entirely for God to decide whether He should grant any extra reward or not; and if He should grant it, then how much, and to whom. In short, it was not for men to say who should and who should not receive any party of the spoils.

This was a major conceptual reform. The war that a Muslim wages is not in order to accumulate worldly benefits. He resorts to it for the moral and social reform of the world and does so when the opposing forces make it impossible to bring about reform by means of persuasion and preaching. Being reformers, the Muslims should focus their attentions on their goal - the reform of the world - rather than on the material benefits which accrue to them incidental by way of God's additional reward in lieu of their strivings. If the attention of Muslims is not diverted from material benefits to their true mission, it is likely that material benefits would become an end in themselves.

Moreover, the concept introduced by the Quran (see the verse above) also brought about a major administrative reform pertaining to war and the spoils of war. Before the advent of Islam, a soldier used to appropriate all that he could lay his hands on, claiming to be its rightful owner, or else spoils were seized either by; the king or the commander of the army. In the former case, mutual conflicts ensued among soldiers of the victorious army, with the frequent result that their victory turned into defeat. On the other

hand, if the spoils were seized by the commander of the army or the ruler, soldiers often concealed and stole the spoils. By declaring that the spoils belong to God and His Messenger, the Qur'an made it obligatory on all soldiers to commit all the spoils of war to the custody of the commander, concealing not even something as trivial as a sewing needle. Subsequently the Qur'an laid down an elaborate set of laws to distribute the spoils of war. According to it, one-fifth of the spoils is to be deposited in the public treasury for public welfare and to provide support for the poor, while four-fifths is to be distributed among the soldiers. (Al-Anfal 8: 41 - Ed.)It thus put an end to the evils inherent in the old system.

A subtle point implicit in the above verse should not be overlooked. In the opening verse of the Surah nothing has been said beyond affirming the principle that the spoils belong to God and His Messenger. The problem as to how the spoils should be distributed was not touched upon. The Qur'an does however subsequently treat the question of distribution see (verse 41) below. It is significant that in this second instance the word used is a verbal derivative of ghanimah (spoils, booty) see (verse 41 )below whereas in the opening verse the word used is Anfal.

اِنَّمَا ا ۡ ۡ ۡ

growth and decline.

All this concerns the essence of belief and unbelief. However, when belief and unbelief are mentioned as a basis for membership of the Muslim community or in connection with legal rights and responsibilities as necessary corollaries of that membership, a clear line of demarcation has to be drawn between those who believe and those who do not. In this respect the determination of who is a believer and who is not will depend on the basic minimum of belief regardless of quality of belief. In an Islamic society all those who believe will be entitled to the same legal rights and will be required to fulfil the same duties regardless of the differences in the quality of their faith. Likewise, all unbelievers - regardless of the differences in the quality of their unbelief - will be placed in the category of unbelievers disregarding the question whether their unbelief is of an ordinary quality or an extremely serious one.

الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَ مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝٣

(8:3) who establish Prayer and spend out of what We have provided them.

اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَقًّا ؕ لَهُمْ دَرَجٰتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَّ رِزْقٌ كَرِيْمٌ ۝٤

(8:4) Such people are indeed true believers. They have high ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness for their sins (3) and an honorable sustenance.

(3) Even the best and the most devoted believers are liable to commit lapses. As long as man is man, it is impossible for his record to be filled exclusively with righteousness of the highest order and to be free from all lapses, shortcomings and weaknesses. Out of His infinite mercy, however, God overlooks man's shortcomings as long as he fulfils the basic duties incumbent upon him as God's servant, and favors him with a reward far greater than that warranted by his good works. Had it been a rule that man would be judged strictly on the basis of his deeds, that he would be punished for every evil deed and rewarded for every good deed, no man, howsoever righteous, would have escaped punishment.

كَمَآ اَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْۢ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَ اِنَّ فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لَكٰرِهُوْنَ ۝٥

(8:5) (Now with regard to the spoils the same situation exists as when) your Lord brought you forth from your home in a

righteous cause while a party among the believers were much averse to it.

يُجَادِلُوْنَكَ فِى الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَاَنَّمَا يُسَاقُوْنَ اِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٦﴾

(8:6) They disputed with you about the truth after that had become evident, as if they were being driven to death with their eyes wide open. (4)

(4) When the people in question were required to fight, they were disinclined to do so for they felt that they were being driven to death and destruction. Their condition is somewhat similar for they are now required not to contend about spoils of war and wait for God's command as to how the spoils of war should be distributed.

This verse could also mean that if Muslims obeyed God and followed the Prophet (peace be on him) rather than their own desires, they would witness as good a result as they witnessed on the occasion of the Battle of Badr. On this occasion too many were reluctant to take on the Quraysh and considered it nothing short of suicide see(Verse 6). But when they obeyed the command of God and His Prophet (peace be on him), it proved to be a source of life and survival.

Incidentally, this statement in the Quran implicitly negates reports usually mentioned in the works of Sirah and Maghazi and which suggest that the Prophet (peace be on him) and his Companions had initially set out from Madina in order to raid the trading caravan of the Quraysh, and that it was only when they came to know that the Quraysh army was advancing to provide protection to the trading caravan that the Muslims were faced with the option of either attacking the caravan or the Quraysh army. The Qur'anic version is quite contrary. Accordingly, from the moment when the Prophet (peace be on him) set out from his house, he was intent upon a decisive battle with the Quraysh. In addition, the decision as to whether the Muslims should confront the trading caravan or the army was taken at the very beginning rather than later on. It is also evident that even though it was quite clear that it was essential to confront the Quraysh army, a group of Muslims tried to avoid it and kept pleading for their viewpoint. Even when a firm decision had been taken that the Muslims would attack the Quraysh army rather than the caravan, this group set out for the encounter with the view that they were being driven to death and destruction. See (Verses 5-8). Cf. Al-Waqidi. vol. 1, pp. 19-21; Ibn Sa'd, vol. 2. pp. 11-14 - Ed.)

وَ اِذ يَعِدُكُمُ اللّٰهُ اِحدَى الطَّآئِفَتَينِ اَنَّهَا لَكُم وَ تَوَدُّونَ اَنَّ غَيرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوكَةِ
تَكُونُ لَكُم وَ يُرِيدُ اللّٰهُ اَن يُّحِقَّ الحَقَّ بِكَلِمٰتِهٖ وَ يَقطَعَ دَابِرَ الكٰفِرِينَ ۷

(8:7) And recall when Allah promised you that one of the two hosts would fall to you, [5] and you wished that the one without arms should fall into your hands. [6] But Allah sought to prove by His words the truth to be true and to annihilate the unbelievers to the last remnant

[5] God's promise was that the Muslims would be able to overcome whichever of the two parties they wished to attack - the trading caravan or the Quraysh army.

[6] This refers to the trading caravan which had some 30 to 40 armed guards for protection.

لِيُحِقَّ الۡحَقَّ وَ يُبۡطِلَ الۡبَاطِلَ وَ لَوۡ كَرِهَ الۡمُجۡرِمُوۡنَ ۸

(8:8) that He might prove the truth to be true and the false to be false, however averse the evil-doers might be to it. (7)

(7) This gives some idea of the prevalent situation at the time. As we have said earlier (see above, p. 128), the march of the Quraysh towards Madina meant that only one of the two would survive in Arabia - either Islam or the entrenched system of Jahiliyah (Ignorance). Had the Muslims not taken up the challenge, the very survival of Islam would have been imperiled. But since the Muslims took the initiative and dealt a severe blow to the military strength of the Quraysh it became possible for Islam to consolidate itself and subsequently the forces of Ignorance suffered a succession of humiliating reverses.

اِذۡ تَسۡتَغِيۡثُوۡنَ رَبَّكُمۡ فَاسۡتَجَابَ لَكُمۡ اَنِّىۡ مُمِدُّكُمۡ بِاَلۡفٍ مِّنَ الۡمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُرۡدِفِيۡنَ ۹

(8:9) And recall when you implored your Lord for help and He responded to you: 'I will indeed reinforce you with a thousand angels, coming host after host.'

وَ مَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بُشۡرٰى وَ لِتَطۡمَئِنَّ بِهٖ قُلُوۡبُكُمۡ وَ مَا النَّصۡرُ اِلَّا مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيۡزٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ۱۰

(8:10) Allah meant this as glad tidings and that your hearts may be set at rest. For every help comes from Allah alone. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.

اِذۡ يُغَشِّيۡكُمُ النُّعَاسَ اَمَنَةً مِّنۡهُ وَ يُنَزِّلُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ بِهٖ وَ يُذۡهِبَ عَنۡكُمۡ رِجۡزَ الشَّيۡطٰنِ وَ لِيَرۡبِطَ عَلٰى قُلُوۡبِكُمۡ وَ يُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الۡاَقۡدَامَ ۱۱

(8:11) And recall when Allah brought on you drowsiness, (8) giving you a feeling of peace and security from Him, and He sent down rain upon you from the sky that He might cleanse you through it and take away from you the pollution of Satan and strengthen your hearts, and steady your feet through it. (9)

(8) In the Battle of Uhud the Muslims passed through a similar experience see (Ale-Imran 3: 154) above. On both occasions, when prevalent conditions should have produced intense fear and panic among them, God filled their hearts with such peace and tranquility that they were overpowered with drowsiness.
9. This refers to the heavy downpour on the night preceding the

Battle of Badr. It helped the Muslims in three ways. First, it provided them with an abundant water supply which they quickly stored in large reservoirs. Second, rain compacted the loose sand in the upper part of the valley where the Muslims had pitched their tents. This helped the Muslims plant their feet firmly and facilitated their movement. Third, where the Quraysh army was stationed in the lower part of the valley, the ground turned marshy.

The defilement caused by Satan which occurs in the verse refers to the fear and panic which initially, afflicted the Muslims.

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَٰئِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ﴿١٢﴾

(8:12) And recall when your Lord inspired the angels: 'I am certainly with you. So make firm the feet of those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. So strike at their necks and strike at every pore and tip. (10)

(10) In view of the general principle propounded in the Qur'an we presume that the angels did not take part in the actual fighting. What we may suggest is that the angels helped the Muslims and as a result their blows became more accurate and effective.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٣﴾

(8:13) This is because they defied Allah and His Messenger. Whoever defies Allah and His Messenger must know that Allah is severe in punishment. (11)

(11) In recounting the events of the Battle of Badr, the Qur'an aims to explain the significance of the word Al-Anfal (spoils of war). In the opening verse of the surah the Muslims were told that they should not deem the spoils to be a reward for their toil. Rather, the spoils should constitute a special reward granted to the Muslims by God, to Whom the spoils rightfully belong. The events recounted here support this. The Muslims could reflect on the course of events and see for themselves to what extent the victory they had achieved was due to God's favor, and to what extent it was due to their own efforts.

ذَٰلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾

(8:14) That is your punishment (from Allah). So taste this punishment, (12) and know that for the unbelievers is the punishment

of the Fire.

(12) Here the discourse is suddenly directed to the unbelievers who we mentioned in(Verse 13) as deserving of God's punishment.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا لَقِيْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوْهُمُ الْاَدْبَارَ ﴿١٥﴾

(8:15) Believers, whenever you encounter a hostile force of unbelievers, do not turn your backs to them in flight.

وَمَنْ يُّوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهٗٓ اِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِّقِتَالٍ اَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا اِلٰى فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَآءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَاْوٰىهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿١٦﴾

(8:16) For he who turns his back on them on such ar occasion - except that it be for tactical reasons, or turning to join another company - he shall incur the wrath of Allah and Hell shall be his abode. It is an evil destination. (13)

(13) The Qur'an does not forbid orderly retreat under strong pressure from the enemy provided it is resorted to as a stratagem of war, for example seeking reinforcements or joining another party in the rear. What the Qur'an does forbid is disorderly flight produced by sheer cowardice and defeatism. Such a retreat takes place because the deserter holds his life dearer than his cause. Such cowardice has been characterized as one of those three major sins which, if committed, can be atoned for by no other good deed whatsoever. These three sins are: ascription of divinity to anyone or anything other than God, violation of the rights of parents, and flight from the battlefield during fighting in the way of God. (See Al-Mundhiri, 'Kitab al-Jihad', 'Bab al-Tarhib min al-Firar min al-Zahf'- Ed.) In another tradition the Prophet (peace be on him) has mentioned seven deadly sins which totally ruin a man's Next Life. One of these is flight from the battlefield in an encounter between Islam and Unbelief. (Muslim, 'K. al-Iman', 'Bab al-Kabi'ir wa Akbaruha'; Bukhari, 'K. al-Wasaya', 'bab - fi Qawl Allah - Tala: inna al-ladhina Ya'kuluna Amwal al-Yatami Zulman' - Ed.) This has been declared a deadly sin because in addition to being an act of sheer cowardice, it demoralizes others and can generate demoralization which can have disastrous consequences. An individual soldier's desertion might cause a whole platoon, or even a whole regiment, and ultimately the whole army, to take flight. For once a soldier flees in panic, it is hard to control the others.

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوْهُمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۠ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ اِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ رَمٰى وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مِنْهُ بَلَاۗءً حَسَنًا ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

(8:17) So the fact is that it was not you, but it was Allah Who killed them; and it was not you when you threw [sand at them], but it was Allah Who threw it, (14) (and the believers were employed for the task) that He might cause the believers to successfully pass through this test. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(14) This refers to the occasion when the armies of the Muslims and the unbelievers stood face to face in the Battle of Badr and were on the verge of actual fighting. At that moment, the Prophet (peace be on him) threw a handful of dust at the enemy saying: 'May, their faces be scorched.' So saying the Prophet (peace be on him) made a gesture and the Muslims started their charge. (See Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, vol. 1, p. 368; Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 668; Ibn Kathir, comments on the verse - Ed.)

ذٰلِكُمْ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مُوْهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

(8:18) This is His manner of dealing with you. As for the unbelievers, Allah will surely undermine their designs.

اِنْ تَسْتَفْتِحُوْا فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ وَ اِنْ تَنْتَهُوْا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَ اِنْ تَعُوْدُوْا نَعُدْ وَ لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَّ لَوْ كَثُرَتْ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

(8:19) (Tell the unbelievers:) 'If you have sought a judgement, then surely a judgement has come to you. (15) And if you desist from disobedience, it is all the better for you. But if you revert to your mischief, We will again chastise you; and your host, howsoever numerous, will never be of any avail to you. Know well, Allah is with the believers.'

(15) Before marching out from Makka the unbelievers held the covering of the Kabah and prayed: 'O God! Grant victory to the better of the two parties.' Abu Jahl, in particular invoked God's judgement: 'O God! Grant victory to the one who is in the right and cause humiliation to the wrong-doer.' God answered these prayers fully and the outcome of the battle clearly pointed to the party which was in the right.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ رَسُوْلَهٗ وَ لَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَ اَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

(8:20) Believers! Obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn away from him after you hear his command.

وَ لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا وَ هُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

(8:21) And do not be like those who say: 'We hear', though they do not hearken. (16)

(16) In the present context, 'hearing' means taking heed with a view to obey'. The verse alludes to those hypocrites who professed to believe and yet were not willing to carry out the commands of God.

اِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَآبِّ عِندَ اللّٰهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِيْنَ لَايَعْقِلُوْنَ ۲۲

(8:22) Indeed the worst kind of all beasts in the sight of Allah are the people that are deaf and dumb, (17) and do not understand.

(17) These are the ones who neither hear nor speak the truth. So far as truth is concerned, their ears are deaf and their mouths dumb.

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِمْ خَيْرًا لَّاَسْمَعَهُمْ ؕ وَلَوْ اَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَّهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ۲۳

(8:23) And had Allah known in them any good He would surely, have made them hear; but (being as they, are) even if He made them hear, they would have surely turned away in aversion.[18]

(18) Such people have neither any love for the truth nor any desire to strive for it. Hence even if they were enabled by God to go forth to the battlefield. they would have turned on their heels at the very first sight of danger. That such people should be a part of the Muslim army might have led to greater harm than good.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ اِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيْكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوْۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَحُوْلُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهٖ وَاَنَّهٗۤ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ۲۴

(8:24) Believers! Respond to Allah, and respond to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives your life. Know well that Allah stands between a man and his heart, and it is to Him that all of you shall be mustered. (19)

(19) The most effective means of preventing man from falling prey to hypocrisy is to implant two ideas in his mind. First, that he will have to face the reckoning and judgement of God Who knows what is in the deep recesses of his heart. Even man's intentions and desires, the purposes which he seeks to achieve, the ideas that he seeks to keep hidden in his heart, are all well known to God. Second, that ultimately every man will be mustered to God; that He is so powerful that none can escape His judgement. The deeper the roots

of these convictions. the further is man removed from hypocrisy. Hence, while admonishing Muslims against hypocrisy, the Qur'an frequently resorts to emphasizing these two articles oi belief.

وَ اتَّقُوۡا فِتۡنَۃً لَّا تُصِیۡبَنَّ الَّذِیۡنَ ظَلَمُوۡا مِنۡکُمۡ خَآصَّۃً ۚ وَ اعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّ اللّٰہَ شَدِیۡدُ الۡعِقَابِ ﴿۲۵﴾

(8:25) And guard against the mischief that will not only bring punishment to the wrong-doers among you. (20) Know well that Allah is severe in punishment.

(20) This refers to those widespread social evils whose baneful effects are not confined only to those addicted to them, but which affect even those who, although they might not be addicted to those sins, are a part of that society. For example, if filth is found at just a few places in a locality it will possibly affect only those who have not kept themselves or their houses clean. However, if it becomes widespread and no one is concerned with removing uncleanliness and maintaining sanitary conditions, then everything including water and soil will become contaminated. As a result, if epidemics break out, they will not only afflict those who were responsible for spreading filth and themselves lived in unsanitary conditions, but virtually all the residents of that locality.

What is true of unsanitary conditions in a physical sense, also holds true for filth and uncleanliness in a moral sense. If immoral practices remain confined to a few people here and there but the overall moral concern of the society prevents those practices from becoming widespread and public, their harmful effects remain limited. But when the collective conscience of the society is weakened to a point whereby immoral practices are not suppressed, when people indulge in evils without any sense of shame and even go around vaunting their immoral deeds, when good people adopt a passive attitude and are content with being righteous merely in their own lives and are unconcerned with or silent about collective evils, then the entire society invites its doom. Such a society then becomes the victim of a scourge that does not distinguish between the grain and the chaff.

What God's directive seeks to impress upon people is that the reformatory mission of the Prophet (peace be on him) and the cause he was inviting people to was the source of life and well-being for them both individually and collectively. People should bear in mind that if they fail to participate wholeheartedly in the task to which they were invited and remain silent spectators to rampant evils, that would invite a scourge that would embrace all. It would afflict even

those individuals who neither themselves committed evils nor were instrumental in spreading them and who might in fact have been righteous in their personal conduct. This point was emphasized earlier see (Al-Araf 7: 163-6)and was illustrated by reference to the Sabbath-breakers, and constitutes the underlying Islamic philosophy for waging war for purposes of reform.

وَاذْكُرُوْٓا اِذْ اَنْتُمْ قَلِيْلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُوْنَ فِى الْاَرْضِ تَخَافُوْنَ اَنْ يَّتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ فَاٰوٰىكُمْ وَاَيَّدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهٖ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

(8:26) And recall when you were few in numbers and deemed weak in the land, fearful lest people do away with you. Then He provided you refuge, strengthened you with His help, and provided you sustenance with good things that you may be grateful. (21)

(21) The reference to gratefulness in the verse is worthy of reflection. Bearing in mind the subject under discussion, it appears that gratefulness does not simply mean that Muslims should acknowledge God's favor to them insofar as He rescued them from their state of abject weakness. God had not only salvaged them from an insecure life in Makka and provided them with a haven of security in Madina where they enjoyed an abundance of livelihood. Gratefulness does not simply require all that. Apart from acknowledging God's favor, gratefulness also demands that Muslims should faithfully obey God and His Messenger out of a consciousness of God's munificence, out of loyalty and devotion to the Prophet's mission, and should cast aside all dangers, hardships and misfortunes that might confront them. In their struggle for God's cause Muslims should have complete trust in God Who has helped them on earlier occasions and Who has delivered them from dangers. The Muslims should also have faith that if they work sincerely in God's cause He will certainly help and protect them. Hence, the gratefulness expected of the Muslims does not simply consist of a verbal acknowledgement of God's benefaction. Gratefulness to God should manifest itself in actual deeds as well. If someone were to acknowledge the favor of his Lord, and yet is slack in seeking His good pleasure, lacks sincerity in serving Him, and entertains doubts that God's benefaction will continue in the future, then that can hardly be characterized as gratitude.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَخُوْنُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ وَتَخُوْنُوْٓا اَمٰنٰتِكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

(8:27) Believers! Do not be unfaithful to Allah and the Messenger, nor be knowingly unfaithful to your trusts. (22)

(22) 'Trusts' embrace all the responsibilities which are imparted to someone because he is trusted. These might consist of obligations arising out of an agreement or collective covenant. It might also consist of the secrets of a group. It might also consist of personal or collective property, or any office or position which might be bestowed upon a person by the group. (For further explanation see Towards Understanding the Quran, vol. 11. (Al-Nisa 4, n. 88, pp. 49 f - Ed.)

وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّمَآ اَمْوَالُكُمْ وَاَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ۙ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ عِنْدَهٗٓ اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۝٢٨

(8:28) Know well that your belongings and your children are but a trial, (23) and that with Allah there is a mighty reward.

(23) Excessive love of money and one's children often impair the sincerity of a person's faith and often lead man to hypocrisy, treachery and dishonesty. The Qur'an, therefore, clearly points out that since love of wealth or children drives people off the right path, it constitutes a considerable test for them. One's property, one's business and one's offspring constitute a test for man since they have been in his custody so as to judge to what extent he observes the limits of propriety laid down by God and adequately performs his responsibilities. What is tested is how far man is able to control his animal self - which is strongly attached to worldly purposes - so that he is able to act as God's servant and render all the rights of worldly life in the manner laid down by God.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ تَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَّيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ۝٢٩

(8:29) Believers! If you fear Allah He will grant you a criterion (24) and will cleanse you of your sins and forgive you. Allah is Lord of abounding bounty.

(24) 'Criterion' signifies that which enables one to distinguish between true and false; between real and fake. This is the shade of meaning conveyed by the Quranic term 'furqan'. If a man is God-fearing and tries his best to refrain from acts which displease God, God will create in him the ability to discern for himself at every step which actions are proper and which are not; which attitude conduces to God's good pleasure and which is likely to incur His wrath. This inner light will serve as a pointer at every turn and crossing, at every up and down in life, guiding him as to when he should proceed and when he should refrain, telling him which is the path of truth and leads to God, and which is false and leads to Satan.

وَ اِذ یَ ۡمکُرِبکَ الَّذِ ینَکَفَرُوالِیُ ثۡبِتُ وکَاَو یَ قۡتُلُ وکَاَو یُ خرِجُ کوَ
یَ مۡکُرُو نَ وَ وَمکُرُ اللّٰہُ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ خَیۡرُ الۡمٰکِرِینَ ۳۰

(8:30) And recall how those who disbelieved schemed against you to take you captive, or kill you, or drive you away. (25) They schemed and Allah did also scheme. Allah is the best of those who scheme.

(25) Apprehending the Prophet's migration to Madina, the Quraysh convened a high-level council attended by all the tribal chiefs at Dar al-Nadwah (Council House) to decide on a decisive course of action against the Prophet (peace be on him). They realized that once the Prophet (peace be on him) left Makka, he would be beyond their reach, rendering them helpless in face of a formidable threat. A group of them was of the view that the Prophet (peace be on him) should be imprisoned for life and kept in chains. This proposal was, however, turned down on the ground that the Prophet's detention would not deter his followers from preaching Islam and that they would seize the first opportunity to release the Prophet (peace be on him) even at the risk to their own lives. Another group suggested that the Prophet (peace be on him) should be exiled, for this would remove the mischief and subversion far from Makka, and it would not matter where he spent his days nor what he did, for Makka would be immune from his influence. This proposal, too, was discarded for fear of the Prophet's persuasiveness and eloquence, and his ability to win the hearts of the people of other tribes and thus pose a greater threat in the future. Finally, Abu Jahl suggested that a band of young men drawn from all the different clans of the Quraysh should jointly pounce upon the Prophet (peace be on him) and kill him. In such a case the responsibility for his blood would rest upon all the clans of the Quraysh. It would thus become impossible for 'Abd Manaf, the Prophet's clan. to take revenge on any one particular clan. Such a move would compel the Prophet's relatives to drop their claims for retaliation and force them to settle for blood-money. Accordingly, the young men charged with the execution of this plan were selected, and were advised of the exact place and time at which they were expected to carry out the crime. Not only that, the would-be assassins did indeed arrive at the appointed place at the appointed time. However, before they could harm him the Prophet (peace be on him) managed to escape safely. The Quraysh plot was thus frustrated at the eleventh hour. (See Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, pp. 480-2. See also Ibn Kathir's comments on the verse - Ed.)

وَ اِذَا تُتۡلٰی عَلَیۡہِمۡ اٰیٰتُنَا قَالُوۡا قَدۡ سَمِعۡنَا لَوۡ نَشَآءُ لَقُلۡنَا مِثۡلَ ہٰذَا ۙ اِنۡ ہٰذَاۤ اِلَّاۤ اَسَاطِیۡرُ الۡاَوَّلِیۡنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

(8:31) And when Our verses are recited to them, they say: 'We have heard. We could, if we willed, compose the like of it. They, are nothing but fables of the ancient times.'

وَ اِذۡ قَالُوا اللّٰہُمَّ اِنۡ کَانَ ہٰذَا ہُوَ الۡحَقَّ مِنۡ عِنۡدِکَ فَاَمۡطِرۡ عَلَیۡنَا حِجَارَۃً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ اَوِ ائۡتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ اَلِیۡمٍ ﴿۳۲﴾

(8:32) And also recall when they said: 'O Allah! If this indeed be the truth from You, then rain down stones upon us from heaven, or bring upon us a painful chastisement.' (26)

(26) These words were uttered by way of challenge rather than a prayer to God. What they meant was that had the message of the Prophet (peace be on him) been true, and from God, its rejection would have entailed a heavy scourge, and stones would have fallen on them from heaven. Since nothing of the sort happened, it was evident that the message was neither true nor from God.

وَ مَا کَانَ اللّٰہُ لِیُعَذِّبَہُمۡ وَ اَنۡتَ فِیۡہِمۡ ۚ وَ مَا کَانَ اللّٰہُ مُعَذِّبَہُمۡ وَ ہُمۡ یَسۡتَغۡفِرُوۡنَ ﴿۳۳﴾

(8:33) But Allah was not to chastise them while you are in their midst; nor was Allah going to chastise them while they sought His forgiveness. (27)

(27) This is a rejoinder to the challenge implicit in the above-mentioned remark of the unbelievers. In response it was explained why people were spared heavenly scourge during the Makkan period of the Prophet's life. The first reason being that God does not punish a people as long as the Prophet is in their midst, busy inviting them to the truth. Such people are rather granted respite and are not deprived of the opportunity to reform themselves by sending a scourge all too quickly. Second, if there are a good number of people in a land who recognize that they have been negligent and heedless and have been guilty of iniquity, who seek God's forgiveness and strive to reform themselves, there remains no legitimate ground for subjecting them to a heavenly scourge. The time for such a scourge comes when a Prophet who has spared no efforts to reform his people feels that he has exhausted all his efforts, and concludes that his people have no justification to persist in their iniquity, and departs from that land or is banished from it by its people or is murdered by them. A scourge from on high then becomes imminent since the people of that land have proven by their deeds their

inability to tolerate any righteous element in their midst.

وَ مَا لَهُم اَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَهُم يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ المَسجِدِ الحَرَامِ وَ مَا كَانُوا
اَولِيَآءَهٗ اِن اَولِيَآؤُهٗۤ اِلَّا المُتَّقُونَ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكثَرَهُم لَا يَعلَمُونَ ﴿۳۴﴾

(8:34) But what prevents Allah from chastising them now when they are hindering people from the Holy Mosque, even though they are not even its true guardians. For its true guardians are none but the God-fearing, though most of them do not know that.

وَ مَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُم عِندَ البَيتِ اِلَّا مُكَآءً وَّ تَصدِيَةً ؕ فَذُوقُوا العَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُم تَكفُرُونَ ﴿۳۵﴾

(8:35) Their Prayer at the House is nothing but whistling and handclapping.[28] Taste, then, this chastisement for your denying the truth. (29)

(28) This is to dispel a misconception common among the Arabs of those days. They were generally inclined to assume that since the Quraysh were the guardians and keepers of the Kabah and were also engaged in worship at that holy spot, they were recipients of God's special favors. Here people are told that the defacto guardianship of the Kabah should not be confused with its de jure guardianship. For only the God-fearing and pious are the rightful guardians of the Kabah. As for the Quraysh, far from behaving in a manner becoming of the guardians of the Kabah, they had virtually installed themselves as its masters, and were guilty of preventing people from worshipping there at will. This attitude blatantly betrayed their impiety, and un righteousness. As for their worship in the Kabah. it was altogether devoid of religious devotion and sincerity. They neither turned earnestly to God, nor displayed any genuine submission or humility, nor engaged in worshipfully remembering Him. Their worship consisted of meaningless noise and clamor, of acts which seemed closer to play and jest than acts of religious devotion. How could such a guardianship of the Kabah and such non-serious acts in the name of worship win God's favor for them, or secure for them immunity from God's scourge?

(29) The Quraysh believed that God's punishment necessarily takes the form of some natural calamity or a rain of stones from the sky. They are, however, told that their decisive defeat in the Battle of Badr, which ensured the survival of Islam and spelled death for their much-cherished Jahiliyah was a form of God's punishment for them.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(8:36) Surely those who deny the truth spend their wealth to hinder people from the way of Allah, and will continue to so spend until their efforts become a source of intense regret for them, and then they will be vanquished, and then these deniers of the truth will be driven to Hell,

لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلَهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

(8:37) so that Allah may separate the bad from the good, and join together all those who are bad into a pile one upon another, and cast them into Hell. They, it is they who are the losers. (30)

(30) What can be more calamitous than a person's discovery at the end of the road that all the time, energy, ability and the very quintessence of his life which he has devoted has driven him straight to his utter ruin; that his investments far from yielding any interest or dividend will require from him the payment of a grievous penalty instead.

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِن يَنتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُم مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِن يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

(8:38) [O Prophet!] Tell the unbelievers that if they desist from evil, their past shall be forgiven and if they revert to their past ways, then it is well known what happened with the people of the past.

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ انتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

(8:39) And fight against them until the mischief ends and the way prescribed by Allah - the whole of it -prevail (31) Then, if they give up mischief, surely Allah sees what they do.

(31) This is a reiteration of the purpose, mentioned earlier in Al-Baqarah 2: 193, for which Muslims are required to wage war. The purpose is two-fold. Negatively speaking, the purpose is to eradicate 'mischief'. The positive purpose consists of establishing a state of affairs wherein all obedience is rendered to God alone. This alone is the purpose for which the believers may, rather should, fight. Fighting for any other purpose is not lawful. Nor does it behoove

men of faith to take part in wars for worldly purposes. (For further explanation see Towards Understanding the Qur'an, vol. 1, (Al-Baqarah 2, nn.. 204 and 205, pp. 152-3 - Ed.)

وَ اِ ن تَوَلَّوۡا فَاعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَوۡلٰىكُمۡ ؕ نِعۡمَ الۡمَوۡلٰى وَ نِعۡمَ النَّصِيۡرُ ۴۰

(8:40) But if they turn away, then know well that Allah is your Protector - an excellent Protector and an excellent Helper.

وَاعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّمَا غَنِمۡتُمۡ مِّنۡ شَىۡءٍ فَاَنَّ لِلّٰهِ خُمُسَهٗ وَلِلرَّسُوۡلِ وَلِذِى الۡقُرۡبٰى وَالۡيَتٰمٰى وَالۡمَسٰكِيۡنِ وَابۡنِ السَّبِيۡلِ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ اٰمَنۡتُمۡ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَاۤ اَنۡزَلۡنَا عَلٰى عَبۡدِنَا يَوۡمَ الۡفُرۡقَانِ يَوۡمَ الۡتَقَى الۡجَمۡعٰنِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ۴۱

(8:41) Know that one fifth of the spoils that you obtain belongs to Allah, to the Messenger, to the near of kin, to the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer. (32) This you must observe if you truly believe In Allah and in what We sent down on Our servant (33) on the day when the true was distinguished from the false, the day on which the two armies met in battle. Allah has power over all things.

(32) This verse lay's down the law for distributing the spoils of war. Spoils of war, as mentioned earlier, essentially belong to God and His Messenger. They alone have the right to dispose of them. As for the soldiers who fight, they are not the rightful owners of the spoils; whatever they do receive should be considered an extra reward from God rather than their legitimate right.

Here it is stated how God and His Messenger decided to dispose of the spoils. The prescribed rule is that the soldiers should deposit all the spoils with the ruler or the commander without making any effort to conceal anything. One-fifth of the spoils thus deposited would be assigned for the purposes mentioned in the present verse and four-fifths would be distributed among the soldiers who had taken part in the fighting. In keeping with the directive contained in the present verse, after every battle the Prophet (peace be on him) used to proclaim: 'These are your spoils. My own share in them is no more than one-fifth and even that fifth is spent on you. Bring everything, even if it be a piece of thread or a needle, or anything bigger or smaller, and take nothing by stealth (gulal), for taking by stealth is a shameful deed, and would lead to Hell.' (Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, vol. 5, p. 316 - Ed.)

It is pertinent to remember that the share of God and His Messenger (peace be on him) in the spoils signifies that a part of the

spoils should be earmarked for the struggle to exalt the Word of God and to establish Islam as an operational system of life.

As to the word 'kinsmen' in the verse, during the Prophet's lifetime, it stood for his relatives. Since the Prophet (peace be on him) devoted all his time to the cause of Islam, he was not in a position to earn his own living. Hence, some arrangement had to be made for the maintenance of the Prophet (peace be on him) as well as for his family, and the relatives dependent upon him for financial support. Hence a part of khums (one-fifth of the spoils of war) was specified for that purpose. There is, however, some disagreement among jurists as to whom this share should go to after the Prophet's death. Some jurists are of the view that after the Prophet's death the rule stands repealed. According to other jurists, this part should go to relatives of those who succeeded him to Caliphate. Other jurists are of the view that this share should be distributed among the poor members of the Prophet's family. To the best of my knowledge, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs followed the last practice. (See the comments of Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and Jassas on the verse. See also Ibn Rushd, Bidayat al-Mujtahid, vol. 1, pp. 377-8 - Ed. )

(33) This refers to the support and help from God which brought about victory for the Muslims.

اِذْ اَنْتُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوٰى وَالرَّكْبُ اَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ ؕ وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدْتُّمْ لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِى الْمِيْعٰدِ ۙ وَلٰكِنْ لِّيَقْضِىَ اللّٰهُ اَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُوْلًا ۙ لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْۢ بَيِّنَةٍ وَّيَحْيٰى مَنْ حَىَّ عَنْۢ بَيِّنَةٍ ؕ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَسَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ۙ﴿۴۲﴾

(8:42) And recall when you were encamped at the nearer end of the valley (of Badr) and they were at the farther end and the caravan below you (along the seaside). Had you made a mutual appointment to meet in encounter, you would have declined. But encounter was brought about so that Allah might accomplish what He had decreed, and that he who was to perish should perish through a clear proof, and who was to survive might survive through a clear proof. (34) Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.(35)

(34) The living and the dead spoken of in the above verse do not signify the individuals who survived the battle or those killed during it. The reference here is to the ideological entities of Islam and Jahiliyah.
35. God is neither blind nor deaf nor ignorant. On the contrary, He is All-Knowing, All-Seeing, All-Wise. Hence, we find reflection of God's knowledge, wisdom and justice in history.

(35) As Allah hears everything and sees everything and knows everything, He is running His universe with wisdom and justice and will allow the right alone to survive.

اِذْ يُرِيْكَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ مَنَامِكَ قَلِيْلًا ؕ وَلَوْ اَرٰىكَهُمْ كَثِيْرًا لَّفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِى الْاَمْرِ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَلَّمَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿۴۳﴾

(8:43) And recall when Allah showed them to you in your dream to be few in number. (36) And had He showed them to you to be numerous, you would have flagged and disagreed with one another about fighting them. But Allah saved you. Surely Allah knows what is hidden in the breasts.

(36) This refers to the time when the Prophet (peace be on him) was leaving Madina along with the Muslims, or was on his way to Badr for the encounter with the Quraysh and did not have any definite information about the strength of the enemy. In a dream, however, the Prophet (peace be on him) had a vision of the enemy. On the basis of that vision, the Prophet (peace he on him) estimated that the enemy, was not too powerful. Later when the Prophet (peace be on him) narrated his dream to the Muslims, they; were also encouraged and boldly went ahead to confront the enemy,

وَ اِذْ يُرِيْكُمُوْهُمْ اِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ فِىْۤ اَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيْلًا وَّيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِىْۤ اَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِىَ اللّٰهُ اَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُوْلًا ؕ وَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿۴۴﴾

(8:44) And recall when He made them appear as few in your eyes when you met them in the battle just as He lessened you in their eyes so that Allah might accomplish what had been decreed. To Allah are all matters referred for decision.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوْا وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿۴۵﴾

(8:45) Believers! When you encounter a host in battle, stand firm and remember Allah much that you may triumph.

وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوْا فَتَفْشَلُوْا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيْحُكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوْا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿۴۶﴾

(8:46) And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not quarrel with one another lest you should lose courage and your power depart. Be steadfast, surely Allah is with those who remain steadfast. (37)

(37) The believers were asked to exercise self-restraint. They

were required to refrain from haste, panic, consternation, creed and uncalled-for enthusiasm. They were counselled to proceed cool-headedly and to take well-considered decisions. They were also asked not to relent an inch even in the face of crave dangers: refrain from acting rashly under provocation; to desist from taking hasty action out of impatience. They were also asked to exercise control over themselves lest they were tempted by worldly gains. All these instructions are implicit in the Qur'anic directive of patience given to the Muslims. God extends all help and support to those who exercise 'patience' (sabr) in the above sense.

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ خَرَجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطَرًا وَّرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ۴۷

(8:47) And be not like those who came forth from their homes exulting, with a desire to be seen of men, and hindering others from the way of Allah. (38) Allah encompasses all that they do.

(38) This alludes to the army of the disbelieving Quraysh, which, when it proceeded on a military expedition against the Muslims, was accompanied by singing and dancing minstrels. (See Ibn Sad. vol. 2, p. 13 - Ed.) Whenever the army halted, dancing and drinking parties were held. Also the army arrogantly vaunted its military power and numerical strength before the tribes and localities which fell on the way, and boasted of its invincibility. (See Al-Waqidi, vol. 1, p. 39 - Ed.) This much is about the moral state of the Quraysh army. What was even worse was the object of their fighting. They were not fighting for any lofty ideal. What they aimed at was merely to defeat the forces of truth and justice, to suppress and obliterate the only group which sought to uphold the truth. They simply did not want anyone to champion the cause of truth and justice.

This occasion was considered appropriate to warn the Muslims not to let themselves degenerate into a group like the Quraysh. God had favored them with faith and devotion to the truth. and gratitude to God for this favor required that they should purify both their conduct and their reason for fighting.

This directive was not meant just for the time in which it was revealed. It is equally applicable today, and will remain applicable in all times to come. The forces of Unbelief today are no different from those in the time of the Prophet (peace he on him) for the moral state of the present-day armies is no better than of armies in the past. Arrangements for prostitution and drinking are as much a part of the present-day armies of unbelievers as ever before. The soldiers

in these armies feel no shame in openly demanding the maximum amount of alcoholic drinks and as many call-girls as possible. Without any sense of shame the soldiers virtually ask their compatriots to make available to them their daughters and sisters for the gratification of their lust. That being the case how can one expect that the soldiers of today would not go about committing debauchery and polluting the life of the people in the lands which they happen to conquer?

Apart from moral corruption, the soldiers of the present-day armies are known for their arrogance and affrontery to the conquered peoples. Their gestures and conversation - both of ordinary soldiers and officers - bespeak of their arrogance. Arrogance is also reflected in the statements made by the statesmen of the militarily-strong and triumphant nations who in effect boastfully say to their people, in the words of the Quran: 'No one shall overcome you today' (Al-Anfal 8: 48) and challenging the whole world in their vainglory: 'Who is greater than us in strength?' (Fussilat 41: 15).

These powers are evidently wicked, but the purposes for which they wage war are even more so. These powers are keen, out of sheer trickery, to assure the rest of the world that in waging war they are prompted only by the welfare of mankind. In actual fact, they might have either one motive for waging war or another, but it is absolutely certain that the motive is not the welfare of mankind. Their purpose is to establish their exclusive control and to exploit the resources created by God for all mankind. Their goal is to reduce other nations to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water and to subject them to thralldom and servitude. Here Muslims are being told, in effect, that they should eschew the ways of non-Muslims and desist from devoting their lives, energy, and resources to the evil purposes for which non-Muslims engage in warfare.

وَ اِذْ زَيَّنَ لَ ُ مُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمٰلَ ُ مْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَاِنِّ ۤ جَارٌلَّكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَآءَتِ الْفِئَتٰنِ نَكَصَ عَلٰى عَقِبَ ۡيِۡ وَقَالَ اِنِّ ۡبَرِ ۡ ءٌ مِّ ۡ نۡكُمْ اِنِّ ۡ اَرٰى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ اِنِّ ۡ اَخَافُ اللّٰ ُ ؕ وَاللّٰ ُ شَدِيۡدُ الۡعِقَابِ ۴۸ ؕ

(8:48) And recall when Satan made their works seem fair to them and said: 'None shall overcome you today. and I am your supporter.' But when the two armies faced each other, he turned on his heels, and said: 'Surely I am quit of you for I behold that which you do not. Indeed I fear Allah, and Allah is stern in punishment.'

اِذْ يَقُ ۡ لُ الْمُنٰفِقُ ۡ وْنَ وَالَّذِيۡنَ فِ ۡ قُلُ ۡ وۡبِهِمۡ مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هٰٓ ؤُلَآءِ دِيۡنُ ُ هُمۡ ؕ وَمَنۡ يَّتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى اللّٰ ِ فَاِنَّ اللّٰ

عَزِيۡزٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ۴۹

(8:49) And recall when the hypocrites and those whose hearts were diseased said: 'Their faith has deluded these (believers). (39) But he who puts his trust in Allah shall find Allah All-Mighty. All-Wise.'

(39) Observing that a small band of resourceless Muslims was getting ready to confront the powerful Quraysh, the hypocrites as well as those who were heedless of God and cared only for worldly interests, often tended to say to one another that the religious passion of the Muslims had driven them to utter fanaticism and zealotry. They were sure that the Muslims would face a total rout on the battlefield. They were puzzled by how the Prophet (peace be on him), in whom the Muslims believed, had cast such a spell over them that they were altogether incapable of rational calculation and were hence rushing straight into the very mouth of death.

وَلَوۡ تَرٰۤى اِذۡ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوا الۡمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ۙ يَضۡرِبُوۡنَ وُجُوۡهَهُمۡ وَ اَدۡبَارَهُمۡ ۚ وَذُوۡقُوۡا عَذَابَ الۡحَرِيۡقِ ۵۰

(8:50) And if you could only see when the angels took away the souls of the unbelievers, striking them on their faces and backs, saying: 'Taste the torment of burning.

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتۡ اَيۡدِيۡكُمۡ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيۡسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلۡعَبِيۡدِ ۵۱

(8:51) This is your punishment for what your hands wrought. Allah is not unjust in the least to His creatures.'

كَدَاۡبِ اٰلِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ ۙ وَالَّذِيۡنَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِهِمۡ ؕ كَفَرُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَاَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوۡبِهِمۡ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيۡدُ الۡعِقَابِ ۵۲

(8:52) Their case is like that of the people of Pharaoh and those before them. They denied the signs of Allah and so Allah seized them for their sins. Surely Allah is All-Powerful, Stern in retribution.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمۡ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعۡمَةً اَنۡعَمَهَا عَلٰى قَوۡمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوۡا مَا بِاَنۡفُسِهِمۡ ۙ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيۡعٌ عَلِيۡمٌ ۵۳

(8:53) This happened because Allah is not one to change the favor which He has bestowed upon a people until they have changed their attitude. (40), Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(40) Unless a nation renders itself totally unworthy of God's favor, it is not deprived of it.

كَدَ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِ ۡ نَ مِ ۡ قَبْلِ ۡمْ ؕ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَاَهْلَكْنٰهُم بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ وَاَغْرَقْنَآ اٰلَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوْا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ۝٥٤

(8:54) Their case is like that of the people of Pharaoh and those before them: they rejected the signs of their Lord as false and so We destroyed them for their sins, and caused the people of Pharaoh to drown. For they were wrong-doers all.

اِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَآبِّ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الَّذِ ۡ نَ كَفَرُوْا فَهُ ۡمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝٥٥

(8:55) Surely the worst moving creatures in the sight of Allah are those who definitively denied the truth and are therefore in no way prepared to accept it;

اَلَّذِيْنَ عٰهَدْتَّ مِنْهُ ۡمْ ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَهُ ۡمْ فِيْ كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَّهُ ۡمْ لَا يَتَّقُوْنَ ۝٥٦

(8:56) (especially) those with whom you entered into a covenant and then they broke their covenant time after time, and who do not fear Allah. (41)

(41) This refers especially to the Jews. After arriving in Madina, the Prophet (peace be on him) concluded a treaty of mutual co-operation and good neighborliness with them. Not only did the Prophet (peace be on him) take the initiative in this connection, he also tried his best to maintain pleasant relations with them. The Prophet (peace be on him) also felt greater affinity with the Jews than with the polytheists of Makka. As a rule he always showed preference to the customs and practices of the People of the Book over those of the polytheists. But somehow the Jewish rabbis and scholars were irked by the Prophet's preaching of pure monotheism and moral uprightness, let alone his scathing criticism of the deviations which appeared in Jewish belief and conduct. They were constantly engaged, therefore, in efforts to sabotage the new religious movement. In this respect, they left no stone unturned. They collaborated with the hypocrites who were apparently an integral part of the Muslim body-politic. To serve the same end they fanned flames to rejuvenate the old animosities between the Aws and Khazraj which had brought about bloodshed and fratricide in pre-Islamic times. They attempted to hatch conspiracies against Islam in collaboration with the Quraysh and other tribes. What was all the more deplorable was that they indulged in these nefarious activities despite their treaty of friendship and co-operation with the

Prophet (peace be on him).

When the Battle of Badr took place, they took it for granted that the Muslims would not be able to survive the very first attack of the Quraysh. However, when the outcome of the battle dashed their hopes, they became all the more spiteful. Apprehending that the victory in the Battle of Badr would help the Muslims consolidate their position, they carried out their hostile activities against Islam even more vigorously'. Kab b. Ashraf, a Jewish chief, went to Makka personally and recited stirring elegies for their dead warriors with a view to provoking the Quraysh into hostile action against the Muslims. It was the same Ka'b b. Ashraf who considered the Muslim victory in the Battle of Badr such a catastrophe that he regarded death to be better than life. In his own words: 'The belly of the earth has become preferable to us than its back.' (Ibn Hisham, vol. 2. p. 51 - Ed.) Banu Qaynuqa', a Jewish tribe, in brazen violation of their agreement of friendship and alliance with the Muslims, took to indecent molestation and teasing the Muslim women who passed through their quarters. When the Prophet (peace be on him) reproached them for this shameful conduct, they threatened the Prophet (peace be on him), saying: 'Do not be deluded by your encounter with a people who had no knowledge of warfare, and so you had good luck with them. By God, if we were to wage war against you, you will know that we are the men.'(Ibn Hisham, vol. 2, p. 47 - Ed.)

فَاِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِی الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِمْ مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ یَذَّكَّرُوْنَ ﴿۵۷﴾

(8:57) So if you meet them in war, make of them a fearsome example for those who follow them (42) that they may he admonished.

(42) The verse makes it lawful for Muslims to feel absolved of the obligations of a treaty with a people who, despite that alliance, threw the obligations of the treaty overboard and engaged in hostile actions against the Muslims. It would even be lawful for the Muslims to engage in hostilities against them. Likewise, if the Muslims are engaged in hostilities against a people and the non-Muslims who are bound in treaties of alliance or friendship with the Muslims, array themselves on the side of the enemy and fight against the Muslims, it would he lawful for the Muslims to treat them as enemies and kill them. For by their brazen violation of the obligations of the treaty concluded with their people, they had made it absolutely lawful for Muslims to disregard the terms of that treaty concerning the inviolability of the lives and properties of at least those individuals.

وَ اِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِیَانَةً فَانْۢبِذْ اِلَیْهِمْ عَلٰی سَوَآءٍ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا یُحِبُّ الْخَآئِنِیْنَ ﴿۵۸﴾

(8:58) And if you fear treachery from any people (with whom you have a covenant) then publicly throw their covenant at them. [43] Allah does not love the treacherous.

(43) According to the above verse, it is not lawful for Muslims to decide unilaterally that their treaty with an ally is annulled either because of their grievance that their ally did not fully observe the terms of the treaty in the past or on ground of the fear that he would treacherously breach it in the future. There is no justification for Muslims to make such a decision nor to behave as if no treaty bound the two parties. On the contrary, whenever the Muslims are forced into such a situation they are required to inform the other party, before embarking on any hostile action, that the treaty was terminated. This step is necessary in order that both parties are clear in their minds as to where things stand. Guided by this principle, the Prophet (peace be on him) laid down a basic rule of Islamic international law in the following words: 'Whoever is bound in treaty with a people may not dissolve it until either its term expires, or he flings it at them (i.e. publicly declares that it had been annulled).' (Abu Da'ud, 'Jihad', Babfi Al-Iman yakunbaynaha al-'Aduw 'Ahad, vol. 2, p. 75; Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, vol. 4, pp. 111 and 113 - Ed.) The Prophet (peace be on him) further elucidated this by sayling: 'Do not be treacherous even to him who is treacherous to you' (Abu Da'ud, Kitab al-Buyu', 'Bab fi al-Rajul Ya'khudh Hakkahu man tahe Yadih', vol. 2, p. 260 - Ed.)

These directives were not given merely in order that preachers might preach them from the pulpit or embellish them in religious books. On the contrary, Muslims were required to follow these directive in their everyday lives, and they did in fact do so. Once Mu'awiyah during his reign, concentrated his troops on the borders of the Roman Empire in order to carry out a sudden attack immediately after the expiry of the treaty. 'Amr b. 'Anbasah, a Companion, strongly opposed this maneuver. He supported his opposition by reference to a tradition from the Prophet (peace he on him) in which he condemned such an act of treachery. Ultimately Mu'awiyah had to yield and call off his troops. (See the comments on the verse by Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir. See also Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad , vol. 4, pp. 113 and 389 - Ed,)

To annul a treaty unilaterally and to launch an armed attack without any warning was common practice in the time of ancient jahiliyah (Ignorance). That practice remains in vogue in the civilized jahiliyah of the present day as well. Recent instances in point are the Russian invasion of Germany and the Russian and British military

action against Iran during the Second World War. Such actions are usually justified on the ground that a previous warning would have put the enemy on the alert and would have enabled him to put up even stiffer resistance. It is also justified by saying that a military initiative has the effect of pre-empting a similar military initiative by the enemy. If such pleading can absolve people of their moral obligations, then every offence is justifiable. In such a case even those who commit theft, robbery, illegitimate sexual intercourse, homicide, or forgery can proffer either one pretext or the other for so doing. It is also amazing that acts which are deemed unlawful for individuals are deemed perfectly lawful when they are committed by nations.

It should also be pointed out that an unannounced attack. according to Islamic law, is lawful in one situation: when the ally has clearly violated the treaty and has blatantly indulged in hostile action. Only in such an eventuality it is not binding on Muslims to first declare the dissolution of the treaty. Not only that, in such a circumstance it is also lawful to launch an unannounced military action. In deriving this legal rule, Muslim jurists have drawn on the Prophet's own conduct in regard to the Quraysh who had breached the Hudaybiyah Treaty in dealing with Bana Khuzaah. In this instance the Prophet (peace be on him) did not notify them that the treaty had been annulled. On the contrary, he invaded Makka without warning. (See Qurtubi's comments on the verse - Ed.) Nonetheless, while acting on this exceptional provision one should be cautious and take into account the totality of circumstances in which the Prophet (peace be on him) took this step. That alone will help one to properly follow the Prophet's example. For one should try to imitate the Prophet's example in its totality rather than just one or other aspect of it depending on one's whim. What we know from the Sirah and Hadith with regard to this is the following:

First, that the Quraysh had so openly violated the treaty that its annulment had become absolutely clear. Even men of the Quraysh themselves acknowledged that the treaty was no longer in operation. It is because of this realization that the Quraysh had deputed Abu Sufyan to Madina to negotiate for its renewal (Al-Tabari. Ta'rikh, vol. 3, p. 46 -Ed.) This fact clearly indicates that the Quraysh were in no doubt that the treaty stood dissolved. It is immaterial whether the party which annulled the treaty verbally declared so or not for it had been violated so blatantly that no room for doubt was left.

Second, after the annulment of the treaty the Prophet (peace be on him) did not say anything, either in clear or ambiguous terms,

which could justify the impression that he still regarded the Quraysh to be his allies or that the treaty relations with them were still intact. All relevant reports, on the contrary, suggest that when Abu Sufyan pleaded for the renewal of the treaty, the Prophet (peace be on him) did not accede to that request, (Ibn Hisham. vol. 2, p. 395 - Ed.)

Third, the Prophet (peace he on him) himself initiated military action against the Quraysh and he did so openly. There was no element of duplicity or fraud in the Prophet's behavior; there was no trace of pretense to be at peace while secretly engaging in belligerent activities.

This is the full picture of the Prophet's attitude on the occasion. Hence the directive of flinging the treaty in the face of the other party as embodied in the above verse (i.e. informing the other party that the treaty had been terminated) may only be disregarded in very special circumstances such as those existing then. And should it be disregarded then this should be done in the straightforward and graceful manner adopted by the Prophet (peace be on him).

Moreover, if some dispute arises with a people with whom the Muslims have a treaty and the dispute remains unresolved even after direct negotiations or international mediation; or if the other party appears bent upon forcing a military solution to the problem, it would be lawful for Muslims to resort to force. However, according to the above verse, force may be used by Muslims after making a clear proclamation of the annulment of the treaty, and that the action taken should be overt. To carry out military action by stealth is an immoral act and can nowhere be found among the teachings of Islam.

وَلَايَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِ يۡنَ كَفَرُ ا سَبَقُوۡا ؕ اِنَّ ہُمۡ لَا يُعۡجِزُوۡنَ ۝۵۹

(8:59) Let not the deniers of the truth be deluded that they will gain any advantage. Surely, they, can never overcome Us!

وَ اَعِدُّ ا لَ ہُمۡ مَّا اسۡتَطَعۡتُمۡ مِّنۡ قُوَّ ةٍ وَّمِنۡ رِّبَاطِ الۡخَيۡلِ تُرۡہِبُوۡنَ بِہٖ عَدُوَّ اللّٰہِ وَعَدُوَّكُمۡ وَ اٰخَرِيۡنَ مِنۡ دُوۡنِہِمۡ ۚ لَا تَعۡلَمُوۡنَہُمۡ ۚ اَللّٰہُ يَعۡلَمُہُمۡ ؕ وَمَا تُنۡفِقُوۡا مِنۡ شَىۡءٍ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰہِ يُوَفَّ اِلَيۡكُمۡ وَ اَنۡتُمۡ لَا تُظۡلَمُوۡنَ ۝۶۰

(8:60) Make ready for an encounter against them all the forces and well-readied horses you can muster (44) that you may overawe the enemies of Allah and your own enemies and others besides them of whom you are unaware but of whom Allah is aware.

Whatever you may spend in the cause of Allah shall be fully repaid to you, and you shall not be wronged.

(44) Muslims should he equipped with military resources and should have a standing army in a state of preparedness, in order that it may be used when needed. Never should it happen that the Muslims are caught unawares and have to hurriedly look around right and left to build up their defenses and collect arms and supplies in order to meet the challenge of the enemy. For then it might be too late and the enemy might have accomplished its purpose.

وَ اِ ن جَنَحُوۡا لِلسَّلۡمِ فَاجۡنَحۡ لَهَا وَ تَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيۡعُ الۡعَلِيۡمُ ۶۱

(8:61) If they incline to peace, incline you as well to it, and trust in Allah. Surely He is All-Hearing. All-Knowing.

وَ اِن یُّرِیۡدُوۡۤا اَنۡ یَّخۡدَعُوۡکَ فَاِنَّ حَسۡبَکَ اللّٰہُ ؕ ہُوَ الَّذِیۡۤ اَیَّدَکَ بِنَصۡرِہٖ وَ بِالۡمُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ ۙ﴿۶۲﴾

(8:62) And should they seek to deceive you, Allah is sufficient for you. (45) He it is Who strengthened you with His succor and the believers

(45) In international dealings Muslims should not act with timidity. They should rather have faith in God and should act with courage and bravery. However, as soon as the enemy is inclined to reconciliation, they should welcome the move and should not be reluctant to make peace even if they are unsure whether or not the enemy is sincere about peace, and whether or not he intends to use the settlement as a ruse to Commit later treachery.

Since it is impossible to know the true intention of others, allowance should be made for their words. If the enemy is sincere in his offer of reconciliation, the Muslims should not continue bloodshed because his sincerity, in their eyes, is suspect. On the contrary, if the enemy is insincere, the Muslims should have courage, thanks to their trust in God, and should go forth for reconciliation. They should stretch out the hand of peace in answer to the enemy's outstretched hand, for that is an index of their moral superiority. As for the hand of friendship which has been hypocritically stretched out in enmity, Muslims should have the strength to smash that hand to pieces.

وَ اَلَّفَ بَیۡنَ قُلُوۡبِہِمۡ ؕ لَوۡ اَنۡفَقۡتَ مَا فِی الۡاَرۡضِ جَمِیۡعًا مَّاۤ اَلَّفۡتَ بَیۡنَ قُلُوۡبِہِمۡ وَ لٰکِنَّ اللّٰہَ اَلَّفَ بَیۡنَہُمۡ ؕ اِنَّہٗ عَزِیۡزٌ حَکِیۡمٌ ﴿۶۳﴾

(8:63) and joined their hearts. Had you given away all the riches of the earth you could not have joined their hearts, but it is Allah Who joined their hearts. (46) Indeed He is All-Mighty. All-Wise.

(46) Here the allusion is to that strong bond of love and brotherhood that developed among the Arabs who embraced Islam and whose conversion brought them solidarity. This strong solidarity existed despite the fact that they came from a variety of tribes which had long-standing traditions of mutual enmity. This was a special favor of God on the Muslims, especially evident in the case of the Aws and Khazraj. It was barely a couple of years before their acceptance of Islam that the two clans virtually thirsted for each other's blood. During the battle of Buath both seemed set to exterminate each other. (Ibn Hisham, vol. 1. pp. 427-8-Ed.) To turn such severe enmity into deep cordiality and brotherhood within a span of two or three years and to join together mutually repellent elements

into a unity as firm as that of a solid wall as was witnessed in regards to the Muslim community during the life of Prophet (peace be upon him) was doubtlessly beyond the power of any mortal. Were anyone to depend on worldly factors alone, it would have been impossible to bring about such an achievement. God's support was the deciding factor in this development and this only serves to emphasize that Muslims should always seek and depend on God's support and favor rather than on worldly factors.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللّٰهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

(8:64) O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for you and the believers who follow you.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ؕ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ عِشْرُوْنَ صٰبِرُوْنَ يَغْلِبُوْا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ مِّائَةٌ يَّغْلِبُوْۤا اَلْفًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

(8:65) O Prophet! Rouse the believers to fighting. If they be twenty of you who persevere they shall vanquish two hundred; and if there be of you a hundred, they shall vanquish a thousand of those who disbelieve, for they are a people who lack understanding. (47)

(47) What is nowadays called morale has been described as 'understanding' in the Qur'an. The Qur'anic expression is more scientific than the currently used word 'morale'. For the word in this context refers to the one who is fully cognizant of his objective, who is quiet clear in his mind that the cause for which he has staked his life is much more valuable than his own life, and hence if that cause is left unrealized, his life will lose all its worth and meaning. Such a conscious, committed person actually becomes many times more powerful than he who fights without any consciousness of his cause, even though the two might be comparable in physical strength. Above all, he who has a clear understanding of reality of his own being, of God, of his relationship with God, of the reality of life and death, and of life after death, who is also well aware of the difference between truth and falsehood, and of the consequences of the victory of falsehood over truth, his strength surpasses by far the strength of others for whom, even though they 'understand', their consciousness is related to nationalism or patriotism or class conflict. It is for this reason that the Qur'an declares that a believer with understanding is ten times stronger than an unbeliever. For the believer understands the truth and a non-believer does not. It may be remembered, however, that the verse also mentions another important factor in addition to 'understanding' which makes a believer much stronger than an unbeliever, and that is 'patience'.

اَلۡـٰٔنَ خَفَّفَ اللّٰہُ عَنۡکُمۡ وَعَلِمَ اَنَّ فِیۡ کُمۡ ضَعۡفًا ؕ فَاِنۡ یَّکُنۡ مِّنۡکُمۡ مِّائَۃٌ صَابِرَۃٌ یَّغۡلِبُوۡا مِائَتَیۡنِ ۚ وَ اِنۡ یَّکُنۡ مِّنۡکُمۡ اَلۡفٌ یَّغۡلِبُوۡۤا اَلۡفَیۡنِ بِاِذۡنِ اللّٰہِ ؕ وَاللّٰہُ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِیۡنَ ﴿۶۶﴾

(8:66) Allah has now lightened your burden for He found weakness in you. So if there be hundred of you who persevere, they shall vanquish two hundred; and if there be a thousand of you they shall, by the leave of Allah, vanquish two thousand. (48) Allah is with those who persevere.

(48) This does not mean that since the faith of Muslims had declined, their ten times superiority over the unbelievers has been reduced to twice only. What it means is that ideally a Muslim is ten times stronger than an unbeliever. However, since the Muslims had not as yet been thoroughly trained and had reached the desire level of maturity in their understanding, they are asked not to feel uneasy at least of challenging an enemy which is twice as strong. It should be borne in mind that the Qur'anic directive was given in 2A.H./624 C.E. when most of the Muslims, being recent converts to Islam, had undergone little training. As they gained maturity under the Prophet's guidance, the desired ratio of one to ten between the Muslims and the unbelievers was established. That Muslims are ten times stronger than unbelievers is a fact witnessed frequently in the battles during the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِیٍّ اَنۡ یَّکُوۡنَ لَہٗۤ اَسۡرٰی حَتّٰی یُثۡخِنَ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ تُرِیۡدُوۡنَ عَرَضَ الدُّنۡیَا ۫ وَاللّٰہُ یُرِیۡدُ الۡاٰخِرَۃَ ؕ وَاللّٰہُ عَزِیۡزٌ حَکِیۡمٌ ﴿۶۷﴾

(8:67) It behooves not a Prophet to take captives until he has sufficiently suppressed the enemies in the land. You merely seek the gains of the world whereas Allah desires (for you the good) of the Hereafter. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.

لَوۡلَا کِتٰبٌ مِّنَ اللّٰہِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّکُمۡ فِیۡمَاۤ اَخَذۡتُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِیۡمٌ ﴿۶۸﴾

(8:68) Had there not been a previous decree from Allah, a stern punishment would have afflicted you for what you have taken.

فَکُلُوۡا مِمَّا غَنِمۡتُمۡ حَلٰلًا طَیِّبًا ۪ وَّ اتَّقُوا اللّٰہَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِیۡمٌ ﴿۶۹﴾

(8:69) So eat that which you have obtained - for it is lawful and clean--and fear Allah. (49) Surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

(49) In attempting to explain the circumstantial background of the above verse, some commentators on the Qur'an have referred to the deliberations for deciding the fate of the Quraysh captives after the Battle of Badr. In that council Abu Bakr pleaded to release the captives in return for ransom while 'Umar suggested that they should be put to the sword. Preferring Abu Bakr's suggestion, the Prophet (peace be on him) set all the captives free in return for ransom. However, God disapproved the decision as is evident from the above-quoted verse. (See Muslim, 'Jihad', 'Bab al-Imdad bi al-Mala'ikah fi Ghazwah Badr'; and the comments on Verses 67 and 68 by Ibn Kathir; and on Verse 67 by Jassas and Qurtubi - Ed.) The viewpoint of the commentators can be faulted on the grounds that they failed to offer any persuasive explanation of this part of the same Qur'anic verse: 'Had it not been for a previous decree from Allah.' This could mean either the Divine decree in eternity which determines all that will happen, or, God's decree in eternity to make the spoils of war lawful for the Muslims. Now, it is evident that it is unlawful to take anything from someone unless it has been declared lawful according to Revealed Law. Hence, were the above view to be accepted, it would mean that all, including the Prophet (peace be on him), had committed a sin. Such an interpretation can hardly he entertained especially since this view is dependent on the authority of isolated ('ahad) traditions.

In my opinion, in order to understand the above verse it should be borne in mind that preliminary instructions about war had already been given in Surah Muhammad which was revealed before

the Battle of Badr:

Therefore, when you meet, the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks. At length, when you have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them). Thereafter, either resort to generosity or to ransom until the war lays down its burden (Muhammad 47: 4).

This verse had already made it lawful for the Muslims to hold the enemy in captivity or to accept ransom contingent on the total suppression of the enemy. The Muslims had, therefore, acted in accordance with the permission granted by God to accept ransom. However, in so doing they had neglected the stipulation that the enemy should be fully subdued before the acceptance of ransom. (See the comments of Jassas on verses 67- 9-Ed.) While the Quraysh army was retreating, many Muslims took to collecting the spoils and taking the unbelievers as captives. It was only a few Muslims who chased the fleeing enemy. Had the Muslims made a concerted pursuit, a death-blow could have been struck at the Quraysh power, once and for all. God, therefore expressed His disapproval of this manner of dealing with the situation as the above-quoted verse suggests. It is obvious that it is not the Prophet (peace be on him) but the generality of Muslims at whom the reproach is directed.

The purpose of the verse is to impress upon the Muslims that they had not yet imbibed the mission of the Prophet (peace be on him). Prophets are not concerned with filling their coffers with spoils and ransom money. Rather their mission is to crush the power of the unbelievers. This was not the first instance when the Muslims had showed their worldliness. They had earlier expressed their preference to raid the trade caravan to fighting against the Quraysh army. Then, rather than try to crush the enemy, they turned to collecting spoils and taking captives, and later remonstrated about the distribution of booty. Had it not been that God had granted them permission to accept ransom see (Muhammad 47: 4), He would have severely punished them on that count. God, however, was merciful to them and permitted them to enjoy whatever they had seized. They should, therefore, refrain from behavior which might be displeasing to God. It is pertinent to point out that Jassas in his Ahkam al-Qur'an, considers the above view a plausible interpretation of the verse. (See the comments of Jassas on this Verse, vol. 3, pp. 72-3 - Ed.) Ibn Hisham also contains a report which supports the view. The report mentions that while the Muslims were engaged in seizing captives of war and collecting booty, the Prophet ( peace be on him) observed signs of disapproval on the face of Sa'd b. Mu'adh. The Prophet (peace be on him) asked him: 'O Sa'd! It appears that you

do not approve of the behavior of these people.' He replied: 'Yes, O Messenger of God! It is the first encounter in which God has caused the rout of the unbelievers. This opportunity should have been better utilized for crushing the unbelievers thoroughly rather than for amassing captives of war.' (Ibn Hisham. vol. 1, p. 628 - Ed.)

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّمَنْ فِيْۤ اَيْدِيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَسْرٰۤى اِنْ يَّعْلَمِ اللّٰهُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُّؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّاۤ اُخِذَ مِنْكُمْ وَ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۷۰

(8:70) O Prophet! Say to the captives in your hands: 'If Allah finds any goodness in your hearts He will give you that which is better than what has been taken away from you, and He will forgive you. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'

وَ اِنْ يُّرِيْدُوْا خِيَانَتَكَ فَقَدْ خَانُوا اللّٰهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَاَمْكَنَ مِنْهُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۷۱

(8:71) But if they seek to betray you, know that they had already betrayed Allah. Therefore He made you prevail over them. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ هَاجَرُوْا وَ جٰهَدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰوَوْا وَّ نَصَرُوْۤا اُولٰٓئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ؕ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوْا مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ وَّلَايَتِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ حَتّٰى يُهَاجِرُوْا ۚ وَ اِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ النَّصْرُ اِلَّا عَلٰى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيْثَاقٌ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ۷۲

(8:72) Surely those who believed and migrated and strove hard in the way of Allah with their possessions and their lives, and those that sheltered and helped them - they alone are the true allies of one another. And those who believed but did not migrate (to Dar-al-Islam), you are under no obligation of alliance unless they migrate. (50) And should they seek help from you in the matter of religion, it is incumbent on you to provide help unless it be against a people with whom you have a pact. (51) Allah is cognizant of all that you do.

(50) The above verse is an important provision in Islamic constitutional law. For it prescribes that any agreement on guardianship would be applicable exclusively to Muslims who are either the original inhabitants of the territory which has become Dar al-Islam (the Domain of Islam) or Muslims who have migrated to the Dar al-Islam. As to Muslims living outside the jurisdiction of the Islamic state, the bond of religious brotherhood would doubtlessly exist between them and Muslim residents of the Islamic state. The two groups, however, would not have the relationship of walayah (mutual alliance). Likewise, a walayah relationship would not exist

between Muslims who do not migrate to Dar al-Islam but come to it as Muslim subjects of a non-Muslim state.

The Arabic word walayah denotes the relationship of kinship, support, succor, protection, friendship, and guardianship. In the context of the present verse the word signifies the relationship of mutual support between the Islamic state and its citizens, and between the citizens themselves. Thus, this verse lays down that in a political and constitutional sense, only those Muslims who live within the territorial boundaries of the Islamic state will enjoy the privileges of walayah (guardianship) of the Islamic state. As for Muslims who are settled in a non-Islamic state, they are excluded from its political and constitutional guardianship.

It is difficult to spell out in detail the implications of this rule. Just to give some idea of it. it should be pointed out that because they lack guardianship the Muslims of Dar al-Kufr (the Domain of Unbelief) cannot inherit the property of a deceased Muslim in the Islamic state. Nor may they act as guardians of Muslim citizens of an Islamic state. Nor is it lawful for a matrimonial contract to be made between Muslims, one of whom is living in an Islamic state and the other outside of it. Likewise, the Islamic state may not appoint to an office of authority those who have not surrendered their citizenship of the non-Islamic state. Above all, these provisions of Islamic law determine the foreign policy of the Islamic state. (Cf. Ibn Qudimah, al-Mughni, vol. 8, pp. 456-8 - Ed.) Since this clause restricts the role and control of the Islamic state over Muslims living within that state, the Islamic state is not obliged to look after the Muslims outside its domain. The following tradition embodies this point: 'I am acquit of every Muslim living among the polytheists.' (Abu Da'ud. 'Jihad', 'Bab al-Nahy'an, 'katl man i'tasama bi al-Sujud - Ed.) Islamic law, therefore, strikes at the root cause of the conflict which bedevils the relationship between different nations. For, whenever a state tries to champion the cause of the minority living outside its territory, it gives rise to intricate problems which cannot be resolved even by a succession of wars.

(51) The above verse makes it clear that the Muslims living outside the Islamic state have no political bond with the Islamic state. This verse, however, does emphasize that those Muslims are not free of the bond of religious brotherhood. If Muslims living in a non-Islamic state are persecuted and seek help from the Islamic state or its citizens, it is incumbent upon the latter to help the persecuted Muslims.

While helping one's brethren-in-faith the Muslims are expected to act scrupulously. This help should be rendered without international obligations and with due regard to the requirements of rural propriety.

If the Islamic state happens to be bound in a treaty relationship with a nation which inflicts wrong on Muslims, the oppressed Muslims will not be helped in a manner which is inconsistent with the moral obligations incumbent on the Islamic state as a result of that treaty .

The Qur'an uses the word mithaq for treaty. This expression is a derivative of an Arabic word which stands for trust and confidence. The expression, therefore, implies that the two parties trust each other, that there is no difference between-them irrespective of whether a no-war agreement has been formally, concluded or not.

The actual words of the verse "bainakum wa bainahum mithaq" ('[unless there be] a pact between you and them') make it plain that the treaty concluded by the Islamic state with a non-Muslim state does not merely bind the two governments. The moral obligations arising from that treaty are binding upon the Muslim nation as a whole including its individuals not to violate the obligations of the treaty into which an Islamic state has entered with some other state. However, it is only the Muslims of the Islamic state who are bound by the agreement signed by the Islamic state. Muslims living outside the Islamic state have no such obligations. This accounts for the fact that Abu Basir and Abu Jandal were not bound by the Hudaybiyah treaty concluded between the Prophet (peace he on him) and the Makkan unbelievers.

وَ الَّذِیۡ نَ كَفَرُوۡ ا بَعۡضُہُمۡ اَوۡلِیَآءُ بَعۡ ضٍ ؕ اِلَّا تَفۡعَلُوۡہُ تَكُنۡ فِتۡنَۃٌ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ وَ فَسَادٌ كَبِیۡرٌ ﴿۷۳﴾

(8:73) And those who disbelieve. they are allies of one another; and unless you act likewise. there will be oppression in the world and great corruption. (52)

(52) If the words 'unless you also help one another' in the verse are regarded as a continuation of the preceding verse, they would mean that if Muslims do not support each other in the way, unbelievers do, this would give rise to much mischief and disorder in the world. However, if these words are considered to be connected with the directives embodied in (Verse 72) onwards, their purpose would be to emphasize that the world would become full of mischief

and disorder if the Muslims of Dar al-Islam (a) failed to help one another; (b) failed to provide political support and protection to the Muslims who have settled down in non-Islamic states and have not migrated to Dar Al-Islam; (c) failed to help the Muslims living under oppression in territories outside Dar al-Islam when they ask for it, and (d) failed to sever their friendly ties with the unbelievers.

وَ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا وَ هَاجَرُوۡا وَ جٰهَدُوۡا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰوَوۡا وَّ نَصَرُوۡۤا اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الۡمُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ حَقًّا ؕ لَهُمۡ مَّغۡفِرَةٌ وَّ رِزۡقٌ كَرِيۡمٌ ۷۴

(8:74) Those who believe and have migrated and strove in the way of Allah, and those who gave them refuge and help - it is they who are the true believers. Theirs shall be forgiveness and honorable sustenance.

وَ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مِنۡۢ بَعۡدُ وَ هَاجَرُوۡا وَ جٰهَدُوۡا مَعَكُمۡ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مِنۡكُمۡ ؕ وَ اُولُوا الۡاَرۡحَامِ بَعۡضُهُمۡ اَوۡلٰى بِبَعۡضٍ فِىۡ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَىۡءٍ عَلِيۡمٌ ۷۵

(8:75) And those who believed afterwards and migrated and strove along with you: they belong to you. But those related by blood are nearer to one another according to the Book of Allah. (53) Allah has knowledge of everything.

(53) This is to remove a misunderstanding. After migration to Al-Madinah, the Holy Prophet had established the relationship of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar, which gave rise to the misunderstanding that they had become the inheritors of one another. This verse says that inheritance shall be determined by the blood-relationship and not by the relationship of brotherhood in the Faith